



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/997,998	11/30/2001	Mara G. Prentiss	H00498/70153 TJO	4037

23628 7590 02/09/2005

WOLF GREENFIELD & SACKS, PC
FEDERAL RESERVE PLAZA
600 ATLANTIC AVENUE
BOSTON, MA 02210-2211

EXAMINER

RODRIGUEZ, JOSEPH C

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

3653

DATE MAILED: 02/09/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/997,998

Applicant(s)

PRENTISS ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph C Rodriguez

Art Unit

3653

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-108 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-54,59,64,73-75,80-95 and 103-106 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 55-58,60-63,65-72,76-79 and 96-102 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 30 November 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 10/22/04.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

Final Rejection

Applicant's arguments filed 10/22/04 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive for reasons detailed below.

The prior rejections are maintained or modified as follows:

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 107 and 108 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding these claims, Applicant has drafted these claims as method claims but has made these claims depend from apparatus claims, thus it is unclear what type of invention Applicant is claiming. Examiner requests clarification and notes that these type of hybrid claims are improper. See MPEP 2173.05(p).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Art Unit: 3653

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claims 55-58, 60-63, 65-67, 76-79 and 96-102 are rejected under 35

U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Ahn et al. ("Ahn")(US 2004/0009614).

Ahn teaches a microfluidic system (Fig. 5a-5b) comprising a channel (between 50 and 60) and an array of "immobilized" magnetic features completely contained within the channel (magnetic arrays 52; para. 54-73), wherein the chemical or biological species are manipulated by the magnetic field (Id.; Abstract). Here, it is implicit from the manufacturing process described by Ahn (para. 63-70) and the fine magnetic control provided by the magnetic array surfaces that said magnetic surfaces have a surface roughness as claimed.

Claims 55-56, 58, 60, 62, 63, 65-72, 76-79 and 96-102 are rejected under 35

U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Chen et al. ("Chen")(US 6,132,607).

Chen teaches a microfluidic system (Fig. 1-3, 5-7) comprising a channel (flow paths 55 near 57) within a substrate (58) and an array of "immobilized" magnetic features completely contained within the channel (magnetic posts 57), wherein the chemical or biological species are manipulated by the magnetic field generated by the magnetic features (Fig. 1; Abstract; col. 7, ln. 4 et seq.). It is implicit that the channel features are dimensioned as claimed from the type of particles being separated.

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments that the Ahn reference fails to teach the claimed features are unpersuasive. Here, Applicant's argues that Ahn is "difficult to understand" and then concludes that Ahn fails to teach the claimed features. However, as cited above, Ahn clearly teaches an immobilize array of features that are specifically designed to separate biological particles via magnetic flux. Consequently, as Applicant has failed to traverse specific defects in Ahn and as Ahn teaches the claimed features, the claims stand rejected.

Election/Restrictions

This application contains claims 55-58, 60-63, 65-72, 76-79 and 96-102 drawn to an invention elected with traverse in Paper No. 11. A complete reply to the final rejection must include cancellation of nonelected claims or other appropriate action (37 CFR 1.144) See MPEP § 821.01.

Examiner has maintained the prior art rejections, statutory rejections and drawing objections as previously stated and as modified above. Applicant's amendment necessitated any new grounds of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a). The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the date of this final action.

Conclusion

Any references not explicitly discussed above but made of record are considered relevant to the prosecution of the instant application.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Joseph C Rodriguez whose telephone number is **703-308-8342**. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F during normal business hours (9 am – 6 pm, EST).

The **Official** fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is **703-872-9326** (After-Final **703-972-9327**).

The examiner's **UNOFFICIAL Personal fax number** is **703-746-3678**.

Further, the examiner is tentatively scheduled to move in April 2005 and the contact info at the new location will be as follows:

April 2005, Personal telephone number is 571-272-6942

April 2005, UNOFFICIAL Personal fax number is 571-273-6942

Further, information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system.

Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PMR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PMR only.

For more information about the PAIR system, see

<http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>


Should you have questions on access to the Private PMR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (Toll Free).

Alternatively, inquiries of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding can also be directed to the **Receptionist** whose telephone number is **703-308-1113**.

Signed by Examiner Joseph Rodriguez

jcr

February 6, 2005


DONALD P. WEST
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600